

Department of Historic Resources

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Contact: Randy Jones, Department of Historic Resources;
804-367-2323, ext. 117; Randy.Jones@dhr.virginia.gov

14 PROPERTIES NAMED TO VIRGINIA LANDMARKS REGISTER

–Register listings promote state and federal tax-credit rehabilitations and preservation easements –

RICHMOND – A tavern once owned by a Revolutionary War captain, a cemetery with the graves of African American Civil War soldiers, and a stone building that offered settlers a frontier fort in the lower Shenandoah Valley were among the 14 properties added to the Virginia Landmarks Register March 7 by the Department of Historic Resources.

DeJarnette's Tavern, a wood-frame structure, was built about 1782 in **Halifax County**. Local tradition holds that Revolutionary War Captain Daniel DeJarnette won ownership of the tavern in the early 19th century after besting his brother in an arm-wrestling match contested for its possession. Used throughout the 1800s as a stagecoach stop and a tavern or ordinary, and a place for mustering troops during the Civil War, the tavern remained in the DeJarnette family for six generations. It is thought to be the oldest standing structure in Halifax County and is considered by the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation to be the most unaltered 18th-century tavern remaining in Virginia.

West Point Cemetery, in **Norfolk**, covering nearly 14 acres, was established in 1873 as a public burying ground for African-Americans. In 1886, prompted by black city councilman and Union Civil War veteran James E. Fuller, Norfolk's council dedicated a section of the cemetery for the burial of black Union veterans. In 1920, a monument honoring black Civil War and Spanish American War veterans—and sculpted in the likeness of Norfolk native Sergeant William H. Carney of the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Regiment—was erected in the cemetery. The monument is a rare tribute in the South to black Union veterans of the Civil War.

Fort Colvin, in **Frederick County**, is a small, rectangular, one-and-a-half-story, stone-and-frame building, with a centrally positioned chimney inside. Its architecture is similar to that of buildings in the Ulster region of Northern Ireland and reveals the Scotch-Irish origins of the people, who along with Germans, settled on Opequon Creek in the early 18th century, making it the first European settlement in the northern Shenandoah Valley. According to local legend, Joseph Colvill built the stone fort in 1755 for use by settlers following the defeat of British General Edward Braddock during the French and Indian War. Although a number of houses built in the vicinity during the same time period still

stand, Fort Colvin, which is in disrepair today, is one of the few structures that have not been significantly altered from its original design.

In addition to the three landmarks above, the following properties also were added to the state register by the two advisory boards of the Department of Historic Resources during their joint quarterly meeting; the properties are grouped according to DHR's regional district offices:

In the Capital (Richmond) and central piedmont region:

- Chamberlayne Gardens, **Richmond**, is a representative example of the garden-apartment housing style that emerged after World War II in many American cities.
- Richmond Locomotive and Machine Works, dating back to the late 19th century, grew out of Tredegar Iron Works to become a nationally-known manufacturer of steam locomotive engines in **Richmond**; the facility was used for manufacturing until late 2006.
- St. Catherine's School, significant for its Georgian Revival--style architecture and campus, is **Richmond's** oldest girls' school, established in 1890 as the result of Virginia Randolph Ellett's vision for rigorous academic training for girls.
- Speed the Plough, in **Amherst County**, is a nearly 300-acre farm with a circa-1850 brick main house and a collection of farm buildings and other historic resource that collectively illustrate the region's agricultural history.

In the Roanoke and southwest region:

- Fayette Street Historic District, in Martinsville, represents the heart of the city's once segregated African-American community that flourished from 1900 until the mid-20th century.
- Keokee Store No. 1, in **Lee County**, built in 1910 by the Stonega Coke and Coal Company (formerly the Keokee Coal and Coke Company), was originally a commissary and community hub, and later acquired by the Lee County School Board and converted in 1939 into Keokee Gymnasium using Works Progress Administration funds.
- Olive Branch Missionary Baptist Church, in **Bedford County**, constructed in 1896 by a congregation that formed as early as 1881, played a central role in the history of the county's rural African American community of Moneta.

In the Northern Virginia and Shenandoah Valley region:

- Bon Air, in **Rockingham County**, an Italianate and Greek Revival house, was built by the Bear family circa 1870 next to Bear Lithia Springs, a boldly flowing water

source acquired by the family during the colonial period and commercially exploited in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

- Driver Farm, in **Rockingham County**, features a circa-1845 Greek Revival--style house and a circa-1839 bank barn that escaped burning by Union General Philip Sheridan's army during his destructive Shenandoah Valley campaign in the Civil War.
- Merrybrook, in **Fairfax County**, one of the last surviving early 19th-century properties in the area, has a farmhouse, dating back to around 1820, that served as the residence of well-known Confederate spy Laura Ratcliffe from about 1869 until her death in 1923.
- Springs Valley Rural Historic District, in **Fauquier County**, covering approximately 7,510 acres, consists of pristine hunt country featuring equestrian and agricultural estates; architecturally significant, picturesque and historic mansions and outbuildings; family cemeteries; a 19th-century gristmill; an early 20th-century merchant's mill; a mill in a barn; a general store; a girl's boarding school, an African-American hamlet with a Baptist church and a school; a sulphur springs resort and the Great Run and Rappahannock River water sources. The district's rural landscape was shaped by the transformation of its 18th- and 19th-century plantations into the grand estates of northern industrialists who arrived in the early 20th century to purchase rural retreats for thoroughbred horse breeding, foxhunting, steeple-chasing and high-stakes racing.

The Department of Historic Resources will now nominate these state-register properties to the National Park Service for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

Photographs and detailed information about each of property is available on the DHR website at (http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/homepage_features/board_activities.htm).

Listing a property on the VLR places no restrictions on owners, although the recognition allows property owners to receive technical assistance from the DHR or pursue state and federal rehabilitation tax-credit incentives and programs. Listing on the state and national registers has spurred economic revitalization efforts in many historic districts throughout the state. Owners of register-listed properties also have the opportunity to donate the development rights to their properties to the Commonwealth through the preservation easement program.

For a property or resource to be listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register, it must meet important historic criteria. It can do so through association with significant historical events or persons, or through possession of outstanding archaeological or architectural features.

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